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# CONFERENCE *connection*

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SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

July 6, 2021



Every two years, folks from across the denomination gather for General Synod. It is a high-spirited, rich experience as people reconnect with old friends and make new ones. It is a time of celebration of the various expressions of the UCC through worship, workshops, discussions, and even business. It has always been a time for laughter, but also a time for discomfort and even tears as we move deeper into our understandings and appreciation for each other.

Because of the pandemic, this year will be different. Like our own Conference Annual Meeting, folks at General Synod are used to meeting people over a meal, late into the evening, having conversations in the hallway, etc. This year, General Synod will be held virtually and is called General Synod "Special Edition." We will miss some of the interactions but

being virtual also allows for new opportunities.

As of last Friday, almost 2,000 people had registered. You can still register as a visitor (fee is \$100) and have the opportunity to participate in workshops (50 are being offered and recorded for future viewing), be engaged by the 2 keynote speakers; be inspired by the 3 worship services, choose to join one of the many Optional Events sponsored by various groups around the denomination; watch intently as the delegates debate and vote on the business and resolutions. Participating virtually will be different but still important as we continue to be engaged as the United Church of Christ and engage in the theme of "Rooted in Love."

<b>Central Pacific</b>	<b>55.8%</b>	<b>Northern California Nevada</b>	<b>34.2%</b>
<b>South Central</b>	<b>40.3%</b>	<b>Southern California Nevada</b>	<b>31.4%</b>
<b>Southwest</b>	<b>38.3%</b>	<b>Rocky Mountain</b>	<b>31.0%</b>
<b>Central Atlantic</b>	<b>37.0%</b>	<b>Pacific Northwest</b>	<b>30.1%</b>
<b>Southeast</b>	<b>36.4%</b>	<b>Illinois</b>	<b>27.7%</b>

as of June 30 2021

\* the percentages were overstated and incorrect in Week 1, but the TOP TEN order remained the same after updates.

You may have noticed the "Congregational Challenge" that has been made - challenging churches to register at least one member for General Synod. The last chart showed the Southeast Conference in 5th place, with 36.4% of our churches having a person registered, either as a delegate or a visitor. Can we keep that trend and get more people registered??

General Synod is Sunday, July 11 through Sunday, July 18. Most of the sessions are in the evening for us in the Eastern/Central time zones. If you cannot register, the three worship services (Opening Worship on Sunday, July 11; Wednesday; and Closing Worship on the 18th) will be open to the public and streamed to Facebook, YouTube, and the website:

[generalsynod.org](https://generalsynod.org).

Meanwhile, please keep our delegates below in your prayers. You are also invited to share prayers for General Synod on the UCC homepage at [ucc.org](https://ucc.org).

Blessings, Char

- Rev. Kriss Choi – Open Community, Duluth, GA

- Joseph Thornton – Community Congregational, Montgomery, AL
- Rev. Haley Lerner – Kirkwood UCC, Atlanta, GA
- Grant Carodine – Spirit of the Cross, Huntsville, AL
- Rev. Tyler Ung – Circular Congregational Church, Charleston, SC
- Rev. Eddie Colf – Brookmeade Congregational Church, Nashville, TN
- Ugena Whitlock – Pilgrimage UCC, Marietta, GA, and our SEC Moderator

**Are you registered as a Visitor to General Synod?**  
If so, [click here and let us know!!](#)

## News from the Conference Office

### Annual Meeting Worship Service Recordings

Just a reminder that the Opening and Closing Worship services from Annual Meeting can be viewed at [www.secucc.org/youtube](http://www.secucc.org/youtube). Perhaps they can be a resource for your congregation, particularly if your congregation is meeting virtually. The link for the recorded Workshops will be sent to those who registered for Annual Meeting.

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### Clergy Zoom Connections for July

- **An Hour of Conversations and Prayer**  
Tuesday, July 6, 13, 20, 27 - 11:00 a.m. Eastern (10:00 a.m. Central); Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/479440102>
  - **Live Harp Meditations for Ministers**  
Thursday, July 15 - 12:00 p.m. Eastern (11:00 Central)  
20 minutes of meditation with Celtic harp. Silent prayer and reflection following if desired, facilitated by Rev. Jean Norton. (For questions or to sign up for individual Therapeutic Harp Sessions, contact Jean at [HeartSongJean@gmail.com](mailto:HeartSongJean@gmail.com).)  
Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/96976838422>
  - **Especially for Specialized Ministers**  
Tuesday, July 27, 2021 - 9:30 a.m. Eastern (8:30 a.m. Central)  
Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/354744689>
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## Re-Opening of Churches – Conversation for all Church Leaders

- **Monday, July 26 - 7 pm Eastern/6 pm Central**

Many churches are moving to in-person worship. This is an opportunity to learn about each other's experiences, recommendations, etc. We invite all Moderators, Church Leaders, and Clergy to be part of the conversation. [REGISTER](#)



### Prayer List

We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers, congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2021. We encourage you to include these prayer requests in your local church newsletter, share them with your prayer circle, and include them in your own prayers.

#### Week of July 4

- Brookmeade Congregational UCC; Nashville, Tennessee
- Tyler Ung
- Patricia Hough
- Courtney Jones
- David Templeton Jr

#### Week of July 11

- First Congregational UCC; Birmingham, Alabama
- D. Houston Hall
- Shelli Poe
- Phillip Price



- Paige Pearson Wimberly

## Pastoral Transitions

- **Rev. Brice Thomas** concluded his ministry on July 4 as Pastor of Holy Trinity Community Church, Nashville, TN
- **Rev. Kate Stulce** has been called to serve Community Congregational Church UCC in Columbus, MT

## Churches in Transition

First Congregational, Montgomery AL; First Congregational, Savannah GA; Trinity Congregational, Athens AL; Rush Memorial, Atlanta GA; United Church of Cookeville, Cookeville TN; Holy Trinity Community Church, Nashville TN

## News from the Wider Church



## Polity Primer 101 with our own ACM Heather Fosburgh

The United Church of Christ has a way of governing itself (“polity”) that’s different than many other denominations. Bound together by covenant and freely entered into through congregational autonomy, the UCC gathers in many different expressions to be the church. Every two years, the United Church of Christ comes together for worship and business, taking time to speak to the church about matters of faith and conscience.

Last week, on July 1, our Associate Conference Minister Rev. Heather Fosburgh joined other UCC History, Theology, and Polity teachers to talk about the gifts and challenges of our structure, how our theological values show up at General Synod, with attention to proposed resolutions for this year’s General Synod.



## "Rooted in Love" Materials for Fall Stewardship

New stewardship materials are available to help tell your story while making a request for financial support. The materials include a variety of items to run an effective campaign, including bulletin inserts, pledge cards, and graphics. A practical campaign guide provides support for leaders who are running their first campaign and also offers suggestions if you're looking to customize stewardship messages to your own setting.

## Summer Pulpit Supply from Global Ministries

If your church needs a sermon, Global Ministries has options in a sermon bank of videos available to download and use in your worship. Each sermon featured includes the scripture and a summary. Additionally, they have mission co-workers on home assignment who are available to preach and do virtual visits. [More details online.](https://us17.campaign-archive.com/?u=01d4c5139f7be9d4d4ff4c63a&id=9c604b9f3b)



## Join Global Ministries for a Virtual Pilgrimage to Puerto Rico!

Immerse yourself in the work, witness, and hope of AMANESER 2025.

**Global Ministries is offering free registrations to the first 20 participants to provide engagement opportunities to Disciples and UCC persons.**

*In the Eye of the Hurricane: A Virtual Pilgrimage to Puerto Rico* is a collaboration between AMANESER 2025 and Global Ministries. This virtual pilgrimage will explore the effects of climate change in this Caribbean island through the lens of Hurricane María, a hurricane that devastated Puerto Rico in 2017. In addition, participants will learn about how colonialism and racism play important roles in the current socio-political situation of the island, further aggravating disaster response and recovery efforts. Participants will also better understand how community organizing and sustaining efforts are vital solutions to these challenges.

[Click here](#) for more information about the schedule and registration. This **virtual** pilgrimage will feature live interactions, discussions, and opportunities to be present in community as we listen, learn, and share with staff and local community leaders of AMANESER 2025. Would you join us?

**Trainings and Conferences**





## Healthy Boundaries for Retired Ministers

Retired ministers who do not serve as pastors in a local church but who may preach periodically, officiate at weddings, funerals, etc., now have the option to attend this special Healthy Boundaries course focused on issues faced by retired ministers.

The course fulfills the requirement for taking a Healthy Boundaries Course every four years. If you have not taken a Healthy Boundary Course before 2017, you must take one this year.

The Retired Minister Course will be offered as follows:

- August 18 online via Zoom 1 pm – 4 pm Eastern
- October 6 at Central Congregational Church, Atlanta 11 am – 3 pm Eastern
- October 20 at Pleasant Hill Community Church, Pleasant Hill, TN 11 am – 3 pm Central

The fee is \$35. Click here to Register. You can either pay online at <https://www.secucc.org/giving/donate/>. Choose "other donation" and be sure to list Healthy Boundary Training on the line provided. Alternatively, you can send a check to the Southeast Conference at PO Box 1950, Decatur, GA 30031.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Rev. Heather Fosburgh at [hfosburgh@secucc.org](mailto:hfosburgh@secucc.org) or call 404-719-6572.

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## Covid-19 Liability Considerations for Ministries

Insurance Board recognizes the important role churches play in their communities and that many are eager to resume their ministry's activities



and outreach. This webcast will provide guidance on current COVID-19 HR and liability considerations for all ministries.

The presenter, Dean Rocco, Attorney and Partner from Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman and Dicker LLP, is a Chair of the firm's National Employment and Labor Practice Group and will share his expert insights about COVID-19 liability considerations for ministries.

Join them on July 15th at 2:00 p.m. Eastern. [REGISTER](#)

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### SAVE THE DATES!

- Virtually on Zoom: October 2, 2021, from 1-4 PM EDT
- In-Person: October 14 – 16, 2022 at Camp Weed and Cervený in Live Oak, Florida

The theme is "God of Mystery - Spirit of Hope." Hosted by the Florida UCC Women: [facebook.com/2021uccsouthernregionalwomensretreat](https://facebook.com/2021uccsouthernregionalwomensretreat)

## Conference Calendar

July 11 - July 18

[UCC General Synod 2021](#)

July 13 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm EDT

[Clergy Conversations via Zoom](#)

July 15 @ 12:00 pm - 12:30 pm EDT

[Live Harp Meditations for Ministers](#)

July 20 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm EDT

[Clergy Conversations via Zoom](#)

July 27 @ 9:30 am - 11:00 am EDT

[Zoom Conversation for Specialized Ministers](#)

July 27 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm EDT

[Clergy Conversations via Zoom](#)

View the **full calendar** of events online: <https://www.secucc.org/events/>

## Contact Us

Conference Minister: **Rev. Char Burch**; [cburch@secucc.org](mailto:cburch@secucc.org)

Assoc. Conf. Minister: **Rev. Heather Fosburgh**; [hfosburgh@secucc.org](mailto:hfosburgh@secucc.org)

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